

flux from the intermediate hopper to the top of the slab being cast within the continuous casting mold, each delivery tube assembly including a flexible line, and an inline air pump associated with each of said one or more delivery tube assemblies for assuring a positive flow of granular mold flux through the flexible line;

B) means connected to each air pump to control the flow rate of the granular mold flux from the inline air pump to the top of the slab, said means varying the air volume delivered to the air pump.

20. The apparatus for introducing granular mold flux onto the top of a slab being cast within a continuous casting mold as set forth in claim 19 wherein the apparatus is further provided with a feed control panel wherein an operator may remotely control the flow rate by either slowing up or stopping the flow if he sees that the flux is building up too high so that it is almost as high as the top of the mold, or by increasing the flow rate if he sees that hot spots are developing or showing through the flux.

21. The apparatus for introducing granular mold flux onto the top of a slab being cast within a continuous casting mold as set forth in claim 19 wherein an I/P device is provided for each air

pump, the air volume being delivered by the air pump being under the control of the associated I/P device.

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22. The apparatus for introducing granular mold flux onto the top of a slab being cast within a continuous casting mold as set forth in claim 21 wherein each I/P device is associated with an air volume booster.

REMARKS

The amendment is in response to the office action dated November 1, 2001. In the office action the Examiner now handling this application stated that the information disclosure statement originally filed in this application did not comply with patent office rules, but that all prior art had been considered. Therefore, in order to save paper, no further information disclosures will be submitted for the art already considered.

The Examiner has next objected to the drawing of FIG. 3. In a separate letter to the official draftsperson, a corrected copy of the first sheet of drawings, which includes FIG. 3, is being submitted.

The examiner has objected to the language in claim 17, which has been rewritten as claim 21. It is respectfully submitted that the language which appeared in claim 17 is proper, and